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## BRER RABBIT AND BRER FOX.

## HOW BRER RABBIT WAS ALLOWED TO CHOOSE HIS DEATH.

ONE time Brer Fox he make a gyarden, an' plant out whole lot er cabbage. Brer Rabbit he come 'long and eat dat cabbage ebry night. Den Brer Fox he make high brush fence all roun' de gyarden; but Brer Rabbit pay no 'tention to fence — jest come 'long ebry night an' eat cabbage same as ebber.

So den Brer Fox he sot traps; but Brer Rabbit he too sharp git cotch dat a-way, an' keep on a-eatin' cabbage. Brer Fox he min' de loss of dat cabbage, an' he git awful mad; but dat don't make no sorter diffe'nce wid Brer Rabbit.

Last, one time Brer Rabbit he done git keerless 'cause he have good luck so long, an' git himself cotched in de trap; an' dar he was.

In de mo'nin' 'long come Brer Fox, see if so be Brer Rabbit mightier got cotched; an' sho 'nuff, dar he were in de trap. Den Brer Fox he feel mighty good; but Brer Rabbit done t'ink his time was come, an' he beg powerful. "Oh, you t'ievin' rascal, I done got you at last, is I? What for you steal my cabbage?" "Oh, please, good Brer Fox, I won't do so no mo'." "No, I know dat you won't, 'cause I'se gwine to kill you." "Oh, please, good Brer Fox, lemme go dis time, an' I cross my heart I nebber steal no mo' cabbage." "Brer Rabbit, 't ain't no use you a-talkin'. I'se gwine to kill you." "Oh, please" — But Brer Fox he don't pay no 'tention, and pretty soon he say: "Brer Rabbit, dey's just one t'ing I'se gwine to 'low you, and dat is I won't kill you by de way dat is hardest for you to die; if you tell me what dat is, I take some other way."

So Brer Rabbit he 'low it was mighty hard to die any way, but dat de hardest way was for Brer Fox to take him home and keep him in nice warm place, and feed him a heap, till he git jes' as fat as he could waller; and den, when he was in dat fix, turn him loose out doors in de deep snow on de fust cold mo'nin'. Den Brer Fox he say: "Brer Rabbit, dat's jes' what I'se gwine to do." Brer Rabbit he beg hard, and 'min' Brer Fox he done promise he won't kill him dat way; but Brer Fox he say dat he jes' leadin' him on, an' now he know what de wust is, he gwine do him dat way.

So he take Brer Rabbit home, and shut him up in tight pen, an' feed him all he could eat; an' he git so fat his eyes stick out. Purty soon, one cold mo'nin', Brer Fox he say: "Brer Rabbit, dis cold enough?" An' Brer Rabbit he say: "No, dis here ain't *half*

cold enough yet." An' so it go on; but Brer Rabbit he nebber find de mo'nin' cold enough. Brer Fox he 'gin to git sorter uneasy like, 'cause Brer Rabbit eat a powerful sight, and his cabbage purty near run out. Last, dey come one mighty cold mo'nin', and Brer Fox he say: "Brer Rabbit, dis here cold enough?" Den Brer Rabbit he begin to beg, and say he don't want to die yet; but Brer Fox say he got to. So den Brer Rabbit he say dat he t'ink it cold enough, and he 'fraid he die a mighty hard death out dar.

So Brer Fox he open de pen an' take Brer Rabbit out, an' put him down on de snow, an' den he sot down on de doorstep see him die; but Brer Rabbit he ain't got no notion dyin' jes' den, so he say: "Oh, you great big fool, dis here jes' what I been use to all de days of my life." An' he go off through the bushes lickety split. Brer Fox he feel awful bad, but could n't help hisself, 'cause de snow so deep he can't run; so Brer Rabbit he got off scot-free.

*Gerard Fowke.*

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